

Long Island, NY – Today, in advance of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's remarks to the UN General Assembly in New York City tomorrow on the Jewish day of atonement, Yom Kippur, Rep. Steve Israel (D–NY) called for the arrest and trial of the Iranian leader under the UN's own Genocide Convention, which says Incitement to Genocide is a punishable act.

Israel said, "President Ahmadinejad isn't merely a pundit whose words can be dismissed: he is the leader of a country developing nuclear arms. He has called for the destruction of Israel and its people, and he has denied that the Holocaust took place. Incitement to Genocide is a punishable act and instead of giving him another platform at the UN, he should be tried."

Article 3 of the UN's Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted in 1948, says incitement to commit genocide is a punishable act. On numerous occasions Ahmadinejad has called for Israel's destruction, dehumanized Israeli Jews, condoned violence against Israel and denied past genocide against Jews. Famously, in October, 2005, Ahmadinejad said "Israel must be wiped off the map, as the imam says."

He has also said "that these false people, these fabricated people [the Israeli people] cannot continue to exist." He has dehumanized the Israeli Jews, saying "They are like cattle, nay, more misguided. A bunch of bloodthirsty barbarians," and, "*The Zionist regime is the hotbed for germs and cancerous cells.*"

Ahmadinejad has shown he is willing to back up his words with action. He has proliferated weapons, supported Hezbollah's attacks on Israel, aided Hamas and continued development of nuclear arms.

There is precedent for prosecution under incitement to genocide. In 1998, Rwandan Jean Paul Akayesu was tried and convicted on 9 of 15 counts of genocide, including the charge of incitement to genocide, which emanated from a speech he gave calling for the elimination of the Tutsis. Other cases were Belgian national Georges Ruggiu and Rwandan leader Jean Kambanda.

Israel previously called for Ahmadinejad's arrest in 2010. Others have called for Ahmadinejad's

prosecution under incitement to genocide as well, including legal scholar Alan Dershowitz who said, “The world cannot afford once again to look back after a genocide and regret that they did not take seriously the incitements to genocide that preceded the awful event. Now is our opportunity to satisfy our international obligation to prevent genocide.”

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